

# Impacted Worker Survey

## Part 1 – Getting Residents Back to Work

Unemployed residents identified connections to a job, training, and career advising as the most important supports needed to pursue employment.

In summer 2020, the Workforce Investment Council (WIC) and Department of Employment Services (DOES) surveyed unemployed District-area workers to identify support needs and barriers faced by residents seeking to return to employment. In a two-part Edsight series, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME) identifies the services residents need to successfully gain employment as well as the barriers that are impacting the return to work. Part One of this series focuses on the supports identified by survey respondents as necessary to pursue employment opportunities.

The Impacted Worker Survey results continue to inform the work of DME and workforce agency partners in developing the investments and supports needed to get Washington, DC back to work after the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Survey Respondents

Through the survey, respondents hit hardest by the dual health and economic COVID-19 crises shared their perspectives on the challenges and opportunities they face. Survey respondents were predominantly from wards with the highest unemployment rates, and had worked in the industries that suffered the greatest job losses over the prior year.

A total of 3,180 individuals completed the digital survey with a vast majority of respondents living in Washington, DC (89%). The following analyses includes both DC residents and those who reported living outside of Washington, DC. The largest percentage of responses

were from Ward 4 (15%) and Ward 8 (14%) and the smallest percentage of responses were reported from Ward 2 (8%) and Ward 3 (7%).

The Hospitality and Tourism industry accounted for the largest single sector of respondents at 17%. This sector also experienced the greatest job losses as a result of the pandemic. Data prepared by DOES in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics found a decrease of 42,700 jobs in the Leisure and Hospitality sector in Washington, DC from January 2020 to January 2021.

Approximately a quarter of respondents reported they were permanently out of work due to COVID, while 40% were out of work temporarily. Approximately a third of survey respondents reported an annual salary of less than \$25,000. Respondents ranged in age from 18 to 86, with an average age of 39.

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**Figure 1: Resident Service Needs to Pursue Employment**



Source: 2020 Impacted Worker Survey, WIC

## Helping Residents Get Back to Work

Survey respondents across all wards identified connections to jobs, access to training opportunities, and access to a professional career advisor as their greatest needs.

Connection to a job was the most in-demand support selected, with more than 60% of respondents identifying support connecting to a job as necessary to gain employment (see Figure 1). Approximately 27% of respondents identified access to a professional career advisor as a support needed.

Beyond the top three identified service needs, 16% of respondents reported access to technology or the internet as a necessary service. Because the survey was delivered digitally, this may underrepresent the demand for technology or internet as those without access faced barriers in completing the survey.

## Training as a Critical Service

31% of respondents indicated they needed access to training to successfully connect to employment opportunities. Examining the demand for training, a quarter of respondents stated they were ready to find and access training, 12% indicated they were already participating in online training, and

8% reported they needed additional support in identifying training programs.

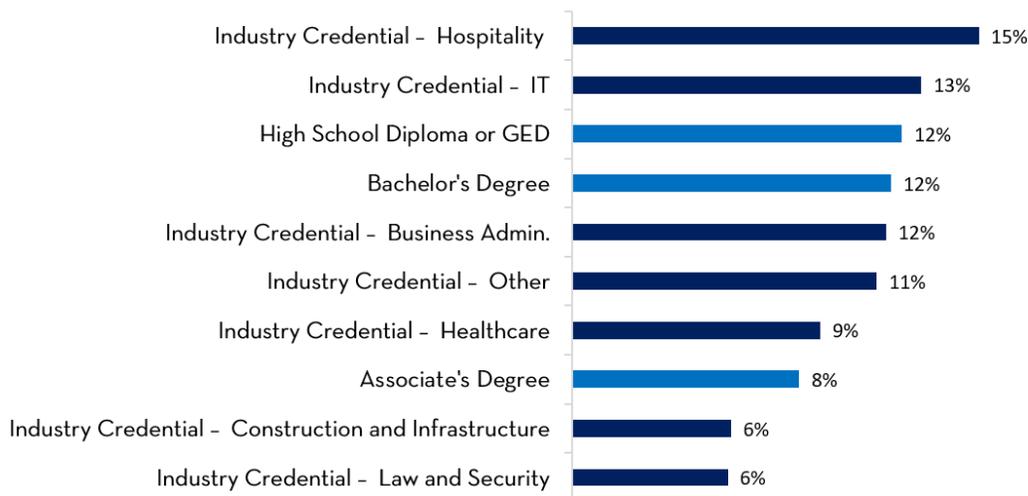
Respondents who reported making less than \$25,000 annually were more likely to express an interest in training opportunities. Specifically, 37% of respondents in this income bracket reported a need to access to training opportunities to pursue employment, compared to 28% of respondents making more than \$25,000 annually.

District-area residents in need of training identified a wide variety of skills and education programs of interest (see Figure 2). A majority of respondents indicated an interest in earning an industry-specific credential, while 12% indicated an interest in earning a high school diploma or GED. Of the survey respondents, 20% indicated an interest in pursuing an associate's or bachelor's degree.

## Part 2: Challenges Connecting to Employment

Part 2 of this Edsight examines the challenges workers face in returning to employment and explore how the District's recovery efforts will support residents in getting back to work. For more information about the survey data, please visit the Workforce Investment Council's [website](#).

**Figure 2: Resident Education and Training Program Interest**



Source: 2020 Impacted Worker Survey, WIC

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